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INFO RUEHZK/ECOWAS COLLECTIVE  
RUEHOS/AMCONSUL LAGOS 8387  
RHEBAAA/DEPT OF ENERGY WASHDC  
RHEHNSC/NSC WASHINGTON DC  
RUEAIIA/CIA WASHINGTON DC  
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ENERGY FOR CAROLYN GAY

E.O. 12958: DECL: 07/31/2017

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SUBJECT: CAMEROONIAN VICE PREMIER DISCUSSES BAKASSI WITH  
NIGERIAN PRESIDENT

REF: ABUJA 2437

Classified By: Political Counselor Walter Pflaumer for reasons 1.4. (b  
& d).

¶1. (C) SUMMARY: In a December 4 meeting, Cameroonian Vice Prime Minister Ali told Nigerian President Yar'Adua that the Nigerian Senate resolution condemning the ceding of Bakassi was an entirely internal affair, to which Cameroon would not react. Cameroonian High Commissioner told PolOffs Yar'Adua had assured Ali the GON intended to comply with the judgment. Senators have backpedaled since passing the controversial resolution. END SUMMARY.

¶2. (C) Nigerian President Umaru Yar'Adua met December 4 with Vice Prime Minister Ahmadou Ali of Cameroon to discuss recent developments regarding the Bakassi peninsula, which the GON agreed to hand over to Cameroon in 2006 in compliance with a 2002 ruling of the International Court of Justice (ICJ). Cameroonian High Commissioner David Sinou, who was also present, told PolCouns and PolOff that Yar'Adua assured Ali the GON intended to comply with the judgment. Sinou said Cameroon considered the Greentree Agreement an "executive agreement" and not a treaty that would need Senate ratification, and added that the GON seemed to take the same view.

¶3. (U) After the meeting, Ali told journalists he brought a goodwill message to Nigeria, and proposed bilateral cooperation to pursue the perpetrators (presumably Niger Delta militants) of the "unfortunate" November 12 attack, in which 21 of Cameroonian soldiers were killed. More importantly, Ali said the Nigerian Senate resolution condemning the ceding of Bakassi to Cameroon was an entirely internal Nigerian affair, to which Cameroon would not react.

¶4. (U) Since the original November 22 Senate resolution (reftel), most press reporting and public Senatorial comments have backpedalled from suggestions that Nigeria would seek to reverse the ICJ decision. Senators are calling for proper procedures to be followed, which they argue was not done when the GON signed the Greentree Agreement in 2006. There are also undisguised appeals by legislators from Cross River State for additional assistance to Nigerians from Bakassi wishing to relocate inside Nigeria.

¶5. (C) COMMENT: Cameroon's restraint and recognition that the

Senate resolution is mainly domestic political posturing is certainly helpful. However, there remains to be addressed the serious issue of refugee resettlement, regardless of any appearance of a shakedown of the GON by Cross River State. The Yar'Adua Administration seems to recognize the adverse ramifications of non-compliance with the ICJ. Nevertheless, we hope the presence of armed Cameroonian troops in close proximity to armed Nigerian police under Nigerian local administration during the two-year transition period (which runs until August 2008) will not lead to any more "unfortunate" incidents. END COMMENT.

SANDERS